

Amendment and Response Under 37 C.F.R. 1.116

Applicant: Timothy V. Stagg et al.

Serial No.: 09/728,697

Filed: December 1, 2000

Docket No.: 54186US017

Title: PLASTIC FILM PACKAGING WITH TEARABLE TAPE STRIP

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 12 and 28.

Please amend claims 1, 17, and 38 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) Packaging for containing an article, the packaging comprising:
a continuous, tear-resistant film formable to define an enclosed region for containing an article, wherein the film is characterized by a puncture-propagation tear resistance of at least 20 N/ply; and
a tearable tape strip secured to the film, the tearable tape strip being defined by opposing longitudinal edges and a central section, the central section being tearable relative to the opposing longitudinal edges such that the tearable tape strip is internally tearable;
wherein the tearable tape strip is configured to controllably tear an opening through the film for accessing the enclosed region upon tearing of the tearable tape strip.
2. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the film is not otherwise cleanly tearable.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the film is tough and exhibits stretching before tearing in response to a tearing force imparted at a nick formed in the film.
5. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the film includes a material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, linear low-density polyethylene, low-density polyethylene, Surlyn® ionomer film, Kraton/polypropylene blends, copolymers of propylene and ethylene, blends of polypropylene and polyethylene, nylon, polyvinyl chloride, and polyvinylidene chloride.

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6. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the film includes multiple layers.
7. (Original) The packaging of claim 6, wherein the film includes a first layer of polyethylene and a second layer of polypropylene.
8. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the film defines an inner surface and an outer surface, and further wherein the tearable tape strip is secured to the inner surface.
9. (Original) The packaging of claim 8, wherein the film further includes indicia disposed on the outer surface opposite the tearable tape strip, the tearable tape strip being located so as to not obstruct viewing of the indicia.
10. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the tearable tape strip is selected from the group consisting of reinforced strapping tape, tensilized polypropylene, and filament reinforced tape.
11. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the tearable tape strip is reinforced strapping tape having a width of at least 8 mm.
12. (Cancelled)
13. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the tearable tape strip is defined by a body and a tab, and further wherein the film is unweakened in the area of interface with the body.
14. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein only a single tearable tape strip is provided.
15. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, wherein the tearable tape strip is a first tearable tape strip configured to be internally tearable and is secured to an inner surface of the film, the packaging further comprising:

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a second, internally tearable tape strip secured to an outer surface of the film substantially opposite the first tearable tape strip;

wherein at least a portion of a width of the first tearable tape strip overlaps at least a portion of a width of the second tearable tape strip such that a single band of material can be unitarily torn from both of the tearable tape strips.

16. (Original) The packaging of claim 1, further comprising:

a cover tape secured to a surface of the film opposite the tearable tape strip.

17. (Currently Amended) A packaged good article comprising:

an article; and

a package comprising:

a continuous, tear-resistant film forming an enclosed region within which the article is contained, wherein the film is characterized by a puncture-propagation tear resistance of at least 20 N/ply; and

a tearable tape strip secured the film, the tearable tape strip being defined by opposing, longitudinal edges and a central section, the central section being tearable relative to the opposing, longitudinal edges such that the tearable tape strip is internally tearable;

wherein the tearable tape strip is configured to controllably tear an opening through the film for accessing the article upon tearing of the tearable tape strip.

18. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the film is not otherwise cleanly tearable.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the film is tough and exhibits stretching before tearing in response to a tearing force imparted at a nick formed in the film.

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21. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the film includes a material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, linear low-density polyethylene, low-density polyethylene, Surlyn® ionomer film, Kraton/polypropylene blends, copolymers of propylene and ethylene, blends of polypropylene and polyethylene, nylon, polyvinyl chloride, and polyvinylidene chloride.
22. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the film includes multiple layers.
23. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 22, wherein the film includes a first layer of polyethylene and a second layer of polypropylene.
24. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the film defines an inner surface and an outer surface, and further wherein the tearable tape strip is secured to the inner surface.
25. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 24, wherein the film further includes indicia disposed on the outer surface opposite the tearable tape strip, the tearable tape strip being located so as to not obstruct viewing of the indicia.
26. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the tearable tape strip is selected from the group consisting of reinforced strapping tape, tensilized polypropylene, and filament reinforced tape.
27. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the tearable tape strip is reinforced strapping tape having a width of at least 8 mm.
28. (Cancelled)

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29. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the tearable tape strip is defined by a body and a tab, and further wherein the film is unweakened in the area of interface with the body.

30. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein only a single tearable tape strip is provided.

31. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the tearable tape strip is a first tearable tape strip configured to be internally tearable and is secured to an inner surface of the film, the packaging further comprising:

a second, internally tearable tape strip secured to an outer surface of the film substantially opposite the first tearable tape strip;

wherein at least a portion of a width of the first tearable tape strip overlaps at least a portion of a width of the second tearable tape strip such that a single band of material can be unitarily torn from both of the tearable tape strips.

32. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, further comprising:

a cover tape secured to a surface of the film opposite the tearable tape strip.

33. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the article includes a food product.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the tear-resistant film is wrapped about the article.

36. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the package substantially conforms to a shape of the article.

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37. (Original) The packaged good article of claim 17, wherein the article includes a base supporting at least one product, at least a portion of the package conforming to a shape of the base.

38. (Currently Amended) A method of packaging an article, the method comprising:

- providing an article;
- providing a continuous, tear-resistant film characterized by a puncture-propagation tear resistance of at least 20 N/ply;
- securing a tearable tape strip to a surface of the film, the tearable tape strip being defined by opposing, longitudinal edges and a central section, the central section being tearable relative to the opposing, longitudinal edges such that the tearable tape strip is internally tearable; and
- forming the film to define an enclosed region containing the article;

wherein the tearable tape strip is configured to controllably tear an opening through the film for accessing the article upon tearing of the tearable tape strip.

39. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein providing an article includes providing a food product.

40. (Cancelled)

41. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein providing an article includes providing a base supporting at least one product.

42. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein providing a tear-resistant film includes providing a film that is not otherwise cleanly tearable.

43. (Cancelled)

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44. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein providing a tear-resistant film includes providing a tough film that exhibits stretching before tearing in response to a tearing force imparted at a nick formed in the film.

45. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein providing a tear-resistant film includes providing a film that includes a material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, linear low-density polyethylene, low-density polyethylene, Surlyn® ionomer film, Kraton/polypropylene blends, copolymers of propylene and ethylene, blends of polypropylene and polyethylene, nylon, polyvinyl chloride, and polyvinylidene chloride.

46. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein providing a tear-resistant film includes providing a multi-layer film including a first layer of polyethylene and a second layer of polypropylene.

47. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein a single, tearable tape strip is secured to a surface of the film.

48. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein the film defines an inner surface and an outer surface, and further wherein the tearable tape strip is secured to an inner surface of the film.

49. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein forming the film to define an enclosed region includes shrink-wrapping the film about the article.

50. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein forming the film to define an enclosed region includes skin packaging the film about the article.

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51. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein forming the film to define an enclosed region includes wrapping the film about the article such that the film conforms with a shape of the article.

52. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein the tearable tape strip is defined by a body and a tab, and further wherein securing a tearable tape strip to a surface of the film includes locating the body along an unweakened area of the film.

53. (Cancelled)

54. (Cancelled)

55. (Cancelled)